

J. J.

SERMON

Preach'd at the Funeral of
Col. Collingwood, and his LADY.

Rec'd 8-7-8-
5-6-8-
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MEMORANDUM

FOR THE RECORD

DATE

1914

A
SERMON
Preach'd at the
FUNERAL
OF THE

Honourable Col. *Francis Collingwood*,
And of his LADY:

Who were both Interr'd in St. John's Church,
in the Island of *Nevis* in *America*, May the
29th and May the 31st, 1699.

By *THO. HESKITH*, A. M.
And Chaplain to the said Colonel's Regiment.

*Durum, sed levius fit patientia,
Quicquid corrigere est nefas.* Hor. lib. 1. Ode 24.

L O N D O N;

Printed for *Richard Wilkin*, at the *King's-Head*
in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1700.

SERMON

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AND OF THE

Who were both taken by the Church
in the hands of the Lord's Church
and the Lord's Church

By the Lord's Church

And the Lord's Church

And the Lord's Church

Is A. Ivii. 1.

The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to Heart; and merciful men are taken away; none considering, that the righteous is taken away from the Evil to come.

IT's probable, that the Prophet in his passionate but pious expression of these Words, had a peculiar regard to the Babilonish Captivity, and to those frightful Judgments, and Destructions, which were the Forerunners of it. For these being general, the Good and Bad had one common fate; they were all involv'd in the same Calamities, all harass'd and oppress'd by the same Enemy. The Prophet was mightily concern'd, to see the Good and Bad to be equal Sufferers; to see those that were Worshipers, and Obeyers of the true God, to be treated at the same rate with those that contemn'd his Person and dispis'd his Laws. This at the first sight one might

might suppose would reflect upon the Goodness and Wisdom of God's Providence; which in Justice one might think, could not be guilty of such unequal Distributions. But if we look narrowly into the end of things, we shall find that it was a wise contrivance of Providence, who can never be surpriz'd nor do a foolish thing. The Good indeed *perish'd*, but it was only with respect to this World; they were *taken away*, but it was *from the Evil to come*. The outward face of things was black and dismal, but the end was Joy and Triumph: It was to bring them to a more steady and perfect Happiness. *The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away.* The 70 translate it ἀνδρες δικαιοι, and just men are taken away, none considering that the just are taken from amongst the unjust. For thus I find it render'd by the Septuagint, ἀπο γ' εὐσεβῶν ἀδικῶν ἡρῶσι οἱ δίκαιοι.

In speaking to these Words I will make this following Attempt.

First, I will endeavour briefly to rescue, from any Misinterpretation, the sense and meaning of those Words, *The righteous perisheth.*

Secondly,

Secondly, I will shew you, that God doth not always use the same method, in taking away the Good and Vertuous; for sometimes he sweeps them away with the common Herd, (*i. e.*) permits them to fall in the common Judgment; and sometimes he singles them out (as it were) and brings them to their Graves in Peace.

And in the *Third Place*, I will go on to add some Reasons, why God is pleas'd to take away good men from the evil to come.

Fourthly, and *Lastly*; I will consider the Character of that Honourable Gentleman and his Lady, which are lately taken away; and conclude, with an Application of the whole, to our present Circumstances.

First then; I will endeavour briefly to rescue, from any Misinterpretation, the sense and meaning of these Words, *The righteous perisheth*. Now, *perish*, in a large Acceptation implies properly, Destruction, Ruine, and Death: and that not only temporal, but eternal. In this Sense the Psalmist is to be understood, when he saith,
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The way of the ungodly shall perish; and again, in the 37th Psalm, at the 20th ver. But the wicked shall perish, and the Enemies of the Lord, they shall consume like Smoak, they shall consume away: i. e. they shall be miserable in this, and in the other World. Again in a stricter Sense, the Word *perish* is taken for temporal Judgments and Death. And in this Sense is that threatening Expression of *Joshua* to be taken, in the 23d Chapter of his Book, and at the 13th Verse, Know (saith he) for a certainty, that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these Nations from before you; but they shall be Snares and Traps unto you, and Scourges in your Sides, and Thorns in your Eyes, until you perish from off this good Land which the Lord your God hath given you. And in this Sense David express'd himself when he said, I shall perish one Day by the Hand of Saul: (i. e.) " I have reason to be-

" lieve, that one time or other God will suffer
 " that Man to take away my Life. Now, it's
 impossible that that Phrase (*The Righteous perish-*
eth) should be taken in that large and high
 Sense. No this cannot be, because this would
 quite overthrow Divine Revelation concerning
 a future Happiness; and all the precious Promises
 (of Christ's gracious Gospel) made to Believers,

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concerning a glorious Immortality. So that it will be much easier (for any considering man) to admit, that the Heavens and Earth shall be dissolv'd, than to suppose that one Jot or Title of the Divine Promises, should fall unaccomplish'd. The First, our Saviour hath told us is possible; but it's purely impossible that the other should ever be. Let not therefore profane Persons flatter themselves with such unreasonable Thoughts, that the Righteous *perish* as well as they. Let not the Wicked think, that when the Righteous die, that they *perish* either as they, or as the Brutes do: for though the Wise-man intimates, that Men according to outward appearance, in the time of Death, have no pre-eminence above that of a Beast; that all go to one Place, and are reduc'd to the same common Dust: yet the Consequences of their dying are vastly different. When Brutes die they go to the Earth, and there's an end of their Existence and Being; of all their Pleasure and of all Pain: but when good or bad Men die, their Souls survive the Earthly Particles; they ascend to the higher Regions. For thus the

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Wise-man maketh the Distinction, *The Spirit of a Man goeth upward, and the Spirit of a Beast to the Earth.* But yet we must distinguish between the Souls of Good and Bad Men; for though they both ascend, yet to different Places; the Souls of Good Men to a Throne of Immortal Life and Glory; but the Souls of Wicked Men ascend to Chains of everlasting Darkness; it's to the *Prince of the Air*, to that wicked Power, which reigns in the Hearts of the *Children of Disobedience*. I must confess, it would be well with wicked Men, if when they die they might be like the Beasts that perish; *i. e.* have no after-Sence, or Suffering. But alas! they live that they may die for ever; and they die eternally, because they live.

But then *Secondly*, I must shew you, That God doth not always use the same method in taking away the Good and Vertuous; for sometimes he sweeps them away with the common Herd; *i. e.* he permits them to fall by common Judgments: and at another time he singles them out (as it were) and brings them
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to their Graves in Peace. Amongst the many inexplicable Myſteries of Providence, this is not the leaſt; That God often-times makes uſe of divers methods, in order to tranſlate good and pious men to another State. Sometimes Providence commiſſions a Deſtroying Angel to draw his Sword, and to make whole Kingdoms deſolate: Thus the Angel of the Lord, in one Night, ſlew of the *Aſſyrians*, *a hundred foreſcore and five thouſand*. And 'tis not to be doubted, but that in ſuch a vaſt Number there were a great many moral good men; who, though they never had the advantages of Divine Revelation, yet they wiſely manag'd their Lives, according to thoſe natural Principles writ upon their Minds. And thus God was pleas'd to ſuffer a great many of his faithful Servants, to fall by the cruel and the bloody Sword of the insulting *Babylonians*. And thus it happen'd in that laſt and great Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, by *Titus* the Son of *Veſpaſian*; when all were met together, to worſhip before, and to ſacrifice to the Lord their God; Commiſſioned Death made no diſtinction betwixt *the clean and the*

unclean, between him that served God, and him that served him not : all sunk in the common Calamity. And thus we find God hath dealt with Mankind in these latter Ages; in the burning of Cities, and in the plundering of Countries, in all those Ruins made by Inundations and Earthquakes, there has been no distinction made between good and bad: for we find that they have been all equal Sufferers. And indeed to speak reasonably it cannot be expected otherwise, without a Miracle. For when Judgments are universal (without a distinguishing Providence) all must partake of the same Fate. The Righteous and the Wicked they are all mix'd, whether it be in City, Town or Country. And therefore, if the Neighbour-hood suffer, some good Man or other must have a share in it. The mixture of the good and bad in this Life is excellently represented by that Parable of the Wheat and Tares. Where ever there's one, there'll be the other; for there's no separating these two. Now, the Wheat and Tares signifying unto us good and evil Men, and this World, the spacious Field where-

wherein they are both sown : we can never suppose any part of this Field to be destroy'd, but we must conclude that some part of the Wheat must sink in the common Fate. Thus we find in that Parable, that when the Servants of the Household ask'd their Master, *if they should go and gather up the Tares?* that he answer'd *Nay*; and he gave them this Reason, *least that whilst they gathered the one, they should destroy the other.* And therefore his Opinion was, *that they should grow both together until the time of Harvest*; and when that came, he would order each to be gather'd to their proper place, *the Wheat to his Garner, and the Tares to be burnt with Fire.*

But then again, sometimes we find Providence picking out the good from amongst the bad, with a mighty caution, and surprising Silence; taking them away as it were by stealth, and undiscernably; *until there's not One left that doth good, not One.* This I must confess looks Judgment-like, as if God had a Controversy with that place and people; resolving to destroy them. Thus we find that God brought *Abijah, the Son of Jeroboam,*

to the Grave in Peace; because in him only, of that Family, *there was found some good thing towards the Lord*: And therefore, upon that Score, God could not destroy that Race, until he had remov'd the pious Youth. And this was the case of that godly Prince King *Josiah*; God was resolv'd to take him away from that evil which he had threatned, and denounc'd against the Kingdom of *Judah*; that he might neither be a Partaker, nor an Eye-witness of their Ruine. *I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and unto the Grave in Peace, and thine Eyes shall not see the Evil which I will bring upon this Place.* So that God seldom or never takes good and pious Men out of any Place, or Country, but when he resolves to destroy and ruine the same: And surely, were but this great Truth seriously consider'd, it would make this infidel and unbelieving Generation look about Them; it would engage them to set a greater value upon Piety and Religion; and to receive and caress the Ministers of Christ's Gospel, with a greater warmth and zeal than they have done. But I am afraid I must say of thee, O *Nevis*! as our Saviour
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in tears said to Jerusalem. O thou that ston'st the Prophets, and those that are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thee, under my Protection and Government but thou would'st not! for Thou dost not believe, and consequently wilt not practise, those things which belong to thy Peace.

But then *Thirdly*, I shall go on to give some Reasons why God is pleased very often, to remove good and vertuous Men out of this Life, that they may neither see, nor partake of the approaching Evil.

And *First* then, It's very reasonable to suppose that God sometimes takes away the Good from the Evil to come, lest they should be destroy'd by those Judgments which He's resolv'd to discharge upon the Wicked. This Truth is very evident from that Parable of the Tares: for the Master of the Household was well satisfied that it was an impossible Attempt to root out the one, without prejudicing the other: Good and Bad Men being so mix'd together in this World, joined so
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near in their Habitations, in their Lands and Interests, in their Relations and other mutual Dependencies: It's impossible without the expence of a Miracle, for God to save the one, whilst he destroys the other: But we find that this is God's usual method, never to make use of Miracles for the accomplishment of his purpose, whilst ordinary means will serve the turn. God can easily execute his Wrath upon the Wicked, to their utter Destruction, without any detriment to the Good and Pious, by removing them out of the way by Death or otherwise. Thus God sav'd *Noah* and his Family, from perishing by *Water*, when he resolv'd to destroy the whole Race of Mankind. And thus God was pleas'd to remove *Lot* to little *Zoar*, that he might the more effectually destroy *Sodom*. Not that we ought to suppose that God's sparing the Righteous, and punishing the *Wicked* in this Life, are all, and the only proper Rewards and Punishments of Vertue and Vice: No, but God is willing to preserve the good from perishing with the bad; lest Piety should be disregarded, or lest the *Wicked* should triumph

triumph and say, Surely, there's no Reward for the Righteous.

But then Secondly, Another Reason why God takes away the good from the Evil to come, is, lest that by the power of Example, and the growing Wickedness of the place they live in, they should be tempted to desert Religion, and a godly Life. The best of Men and Women here, are but imperfectly Holy : As the Apostle saith, *We know and see but in part*. And therefore, if we keep not a strong guard upon all our Passions ; if we pray not daily for the assistance of Divine Grace, and for the conduct of God's Holy Spirit, it's a thousand to one but we fall from our Integrity and Vertue : *For a little Leaven, (our Saviour tells us) leavens the whole Lump.* And that Saying of St. Paul is an experimental Truth, *That evil Communications corrupts good Manners.* Vice and Irreligion are of an infectious nature, and they will as certainly destroy the Life of Godliness, as the Plague will destroy the Body. For without that Sovereign Antidote of assisting and confirming Grace, 'twill be impossible to keep
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any considerable Fellowship with the Sons of Wickedness, and at the same time not to be infected by them. Let good Men use the greatest Cautions in this Case imaginable; let them set the strongest Guards; let them *put on the whole Armour of God*; and when they have done all they can, they'll find it no small difficulty to keep themselves unspotted from the World: *i. e.* from the evil Communications and Corruptions of it. The best Men in the World, if they converse much in it, will receive a Tincture from it: Thus we find that the Holy Patriarch, Vice-Roy of *Egypt*, by conversing with that Court, had learn'd to swear *by the Life of Pharaoh*. The power of Example's strong, especially when it's back'd with Earthly Grandeur, and Secular Interest: when those that sit at the Helm of Government, love vicious and irregular Lives, their very Example is a authentick Copy for the rest to write by. So that for this end, and for several other Considerations tending to this purpose, God is pleas'd oftentimes to remove pious Men out of this World, lest their Innocence should be sullied, and their Vertue debauch'd by the wicked Practises of the Ungodly.

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But it's high time that I should enter upon the last thing propos'd; which is to consider the Character of that Honourable Gentleman and his Lady, which are lately taken away from us: and to conclude the Discourse with an Application of the whole to our present Circumstances.

And to speak without Flattery, I do not know but that God hath taken away a great part of this Family, that their Eyes might not behold the Evil which he's resolv'd to bring upon this Place: This I must confess is a weighty Saying; but I wish that there were not so many Reasons as there are, to engage us to the belief of it. Let us not flatter our selves; For that Government, or Body Politick, whose Head and Members are unsound and sickly, must needs be near its Grave, its Ruine and Destruction. Iniquity will certainly be the Ruine of any People, if the Mercies of God, and a serious Repentance prevent it not.

But that I may do all possible Justice to the Memory of this deceas'd Hero; it's needful that we consider him in all his Qualities.

First, As he descended from the Loins of an Honourable Family; a Family as antient as most in the North of *England*. But that which makes it the more illustrious, is, That it hath not wanted for some Ages, such Men as have been serviceable to the Crown and Government of *England*. And I think I may say, that among all the *Braves* that have sprung from that Family, this Hero, of whom I have the sad occasion to discourse at this time, is none of the Least; especially if we consider him under that Notion of a Soldier, or of an Officer. So soon as he left the Schools, which was in his earlier Years, his Genius rather prompting him to follow *Mars* than *Minerva*; the Camp rather than the College. He was sent with very powerful Recommendations into the Army; where he had not been long until he was Commission'd to have a pair of Colours: in which Post he behaved himself with all that Affability and Sweetness of Temper, that his Society and Conversation was courted by All; as if he had been the very Darling and Delight of Mankind. And as he grew in Years, so his Conversation became the more winning and obliging.

liging. And in every Step of Honour the King was pleas'd to advance him to, he behav'd himself in all respects as a brave and prudent Officer. And which is very remarkable, the Advancement of his Honour never alter'd the Sweetness of his Temper; he retain'd the same Modesty, the same Humility, and Evenness of Mind, when he arriv'd to that Honourable Post in which he died, as he did whilst he was in an inferior Capacity. What the *Maiden Queen* made use of for her Motto might very properly be applied to our Hero, *Semper idem*. No State or Condition of Fortune, whether prosperous or adverse, could change or alter the Disposition of his Soul. He kept the same evenness of Mind, and firmness of Temper, amidst the Rocks and Shelves, as he did when his Sails were fill'd with a prosperous Gale. His Soul was too great to be sunk by Adversity, too firm and steady to be turned away by the swelling Tides of Prosperity. But I must not only consider him as a Civil or Moral, but as a Military Person, as a man of bravery and honour: and to make good this part of his

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Character, I shall only instance in two Particulars; (not but that upon every occasion when he was call'd to it, he gave signal Proofs of his Conduct and Courage.) And these two shall be in that of *Landen* and *Namure*; two great and illustrious Instances indeed; both of them I am sure beyond the reach of Malice; and probably the latter beyond that of Imitation. As for that of *Landen*, notwithstanding the great Inequality and Number of his Enemies, he bravely charg'd in the face of them, and as bravely maintain'd his Ground; until at length being overpower'd by their Numbers, he was forc'd to retreat, in order to save the remains of a shatter'd Regiment: But as for the *Latter*, when he was ordered to attack one of the *Glacys* of the Town of *Namure*; With what cheerful Countenance did he receive the Command? With what a pleasant Air did he head that brave Body? And with what an unconcern'd bravery did he march through a field of Blood and Wounds? How lightly did he esteem the hazard, and boldly despise all these Engines of Death that were
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planted against him for his ruin? Nay, With what a fearless Presence of mind, did he endeavour to make good his Post, when fifty fell at his right hand, and fifty at his left? The *Greatest Monarch* in the World, I mean his *Royal Master*, beheld the Action with these two contrary Passions of Delight and Fear: with Delight to behold the unparallel'd bravery of such an Attempt; of Fear, lest he should be depriv'd of so great an Officer. The truth of it is, the glory of that Day and Action, is so much his own, as neither Time nor Envy shall be able to obliterate the Fame thereof. The *Maes* and *Sambre* shall sooner leave their Channels, and the Sun and Moon cease to be, than the glory of that Day due to him be obscur'd and forgotten.

But before I dismiss this Head, I must consider him as a Christian; and though some foolish men may think, that Religion is not consistent with, at least not necessary to, a military Employment: and consequently, that men of that Profession are not concern'd about such matters. Yet in a late Discourse, I have endeavour'd to prove the
contrary.

contrary, by shewing that there have been, and are such things call'd *pious Soldiers*; and detected the Vanity of that Objection, that Religion debauches and effeminates the minds of Mankind. But this Man of Honour, of whom we are now speaking, had contrary Sentiments, and quite of another Opinion: he knew his Employment and Religion to be very consistent; and for that end he endeavour'd to make it as much his business, as the great and necessary Avocations of his Employment would permit. We cannot reasonably expect, that those men who are plac'd in high and difficult Employments, that they should be so warmly zealous, and so perfectly religious, as those who are cloyster'd up, and sequester'd from the VWorld for that end and purpose. But this I'll venture to say of this disceas'd Worthy: That whereas, some Mens Religion consists in mean Appearance; that He was more sincerely religious, than what he appear'd to be. I am sure he was master of two of the greatest Christian Vertues in the Gospel; (*i. e.*) *Mercifulness* and *Charity*. How ready was he

he to pardon the Offence of an Enemy ? And to treat those generously, that had done him ill Offices: as he never rais'd an ill report of his Neighbour, so neither did he entertain the malicious Whispers of those that did : he was always ready to compose Differences, and to heal every Breach that was made between Friends or Enemies: Whatever Failings therefore he might be guilty of, (for the best have their Spots) I do not question but these two Graces have atton'd for all ; have over-ballanc'd the whole Account. I am sure our Saviour in that Discourse upon the Mount hath told us, *That the Merciful shall obtain Mercy* : And St. Peter speaking by the Spirit of God, tells us, *That Charity shall cover a Multitude of Sins*. To be short, he was a tender Husband, and an indulgent Father, a true Friend, and a generous Enemy : And indeed upon this Score, our Loss is very great. The King hath lost a brave, and experienc'd Captain, a Good and Loyal Subject, the Regiment a kind and easy Commander, the Neighbourhood a just and humble Man, and the whole Land a Gentleman of the

sweetest Temper, and most desirable Conversation in the World.

But I must hasten to the Memorial of his Lady : and I shall be very brief in what I say.

And first then, She was sprung from Pious and Religious Parents, who had made it their business to instruct Her early in the ways of Vertue. I may say of her, what St. Paul said of Timothy, *That from a Child she had known the Holy Scriptures*: and as She grew in Years, She advanc'd in Understanding, until She had arriv'd to such a Perfection in the Knowledge of Divine Mysteries, that few (I think of her Sex) in the Kingdom of England, were better able to maintain the Principles of the Protestant Religion than she was: but this was but the least Part; for she only learn'd to practice; only read the Scriptures, that she might be the better able, not only to understand, but to do her Duty: for she knew very well, that the end of all Knowledge was Practice, and that without this, all

all the rest was but Shadow and Appearance. I know indeed she had many Enemies, and that of all Ranks and Qualities: But this is no wonder, if we consider the Reasons why: she was a Woman of Retirement, of Religion and Vertue; a Lover of God, of his Church, of his Ministers and Holy Offices. And these you all know are hated by the World, are abhor'd, ridicul'd, and undervallu'd. And therefore, when ever she met with those Despisers, and Contemnners of Religion, she always took up the Gauntlet in the defence of Christ and his Gospel. She was not ashamed to own him before the greatest Quality, nor afraid to reprove those Sons of Darkness, when occasion serv'd. So that I may say of her, what St. Paul said of himself in the like Case, *That many became her Enemies, because she told them the Truth.* VVee Eyes are willing to behold the Sun, but when they cannot, they curse it's splendour; and thus it is with wicked Men; they always malign and speak evil of that Vertue, which they neither desire, nor are able to imitate. In one word, if we consider Her in all

respects, as a VVife, as a Mother, as a Friend, as a Neighbour, and as a Christian. I think I may (without Vanity) make use of Solomon's VVords: *Many Women have done virtuously, but thou excells them all. Therefore let us give her of the Fruit of her Hands, and let her own Works praise her in the Gates.*

I shall now only beg leave to reflect upon what hath been spoken; and so conclude. Is it so then, that God usually removes the Good and Pious out of this Life, that they may not behold those Judgments and Miseries that He's resolv'd to bring upon the Place where they liv'd? Let us then be concern'd for the loss of those that are good; and let us beg heartily of God, that he may continue such amongst us: and for that end let us look upon all the Despisers of Religion and Godliness, as Enemies to the Publick Good; and as those that seek the ruine of the Place they live in; and let us give all possible Protection and Encouragement to Virtue and Religion, to the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and to the Ministers of it. Let us not
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be like the foolish *Gadarens*, that prefer'd their Swine before Jesus Christ, nor like the Young man in the Gospel, who prefer'd his Temporal Possessions to Eternal Life : for let us assure our selves, that whoever he be *that denies Christ before Men, that Christ will deny that Man in the Presence of God, and of his Holy Angels.*

But then again, Religion and Piety are the *Palladiums*, the very Bull-work and Safety of any Nation, Place or People. It was upon *Jacob's* Account that God blest *Laban*; and wicked *Ahab*, for the sake of *Obadiab*. There's a wonderful kind of Power that attends Godliness; such holy Violence, as even binds the hands of Omnipotency. Thus *Jacob* wrestl'd and prevail'd with God; and the Angels that were sent to destroy *Sodom*, they could not do it, until holy *Lot* was entred little *Zoar*. Every godly Man is a *Moses*, he stands in the Breach, and by his Prayers prevails with God to divert his Judgments. In a word, pious and good Men, they are the very Chariots and Horse-men of Israel:
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And in what place soever they live, God commands a Blessing: Let us not therefore be of the Number of those Fools, who say in their Heart there is no God, neither let us walk in the Counsel of the Ungodly, nor sit in the Seat of the Scornful; but let us meditate on Gods Law, and conform our Lives and Practices to the Rules of the Gospel; so that when ever it shall please God to call us out of this mortal State, we may all of us in some measure, have reason to say with St. Paul, The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good Fight, I have finish'd my Course, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there's laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible,
the Only Wise God, be Honour and Glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

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